

## THE PRESENT CONDITION OF INDIA

makes us responsible for acts which would horrify us, if ever we were conscious of their effects, but they are obscured for us amidst the flags and bunting. But we cannot escape responsibility; the question still echoes down the ages: "When saw we thee enhungered?"<sup>1</sup> If we accept the fact that imperialism is wrong, this will involve profound changes in the social order.

It is both ironical and tragic that Christianity, which so clearly condemns racial pride and imperial domination, has unconsciously helped to support them; Caiaphas and Pilate are still in alliance, and only too often Christ is crucified afresh in the victims of war and exploitation.

We must try to slough off the assumption of superiority and regard the people of India as comrades in a common struggle for a decent world. When Lord Ripon tried to abolish racial discrimination which refused to permit a European to be judged by an Indian, there was an outcry and Mr. Seton Kerr said in a speech in London: "It outraged the cherished conviction which was shared by every Englishman in India from the highest to the lowest . . . that he belongs to a race which God has destined to govern and subdue.\*" Lord Roberts also remarked that "it is this consciousness of the inherent superiority of the Europeans which has won for us India. However well educated or clever a native may be, and however brave he may have proved himself, I believe that no rank which we can bestow on him would cause him to be considered an equal by the British officer." These sentiments are out-of-date, but how far have they been truly exorcised? It is this spirit which is animating the Nazis to-day. May I add a quotation from a prayer in the Revised 'Prayer Book of the Church of

<sup>1</sup> "Ignorance is not a simple matter of the absence of knowledge of facts, but it is far more the control of our minds by prejudices and patterns of thinking and feeling which cover up the facts" (Bennet).